



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF COORDINATOR OF FISHERIES

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With the quantity of fish and shellfish held in freezing establishments and cold storage houses throughout the country now at the highest point in history for this season of the year, officials of the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries today expressed concern over the lack of storage space for the heavy landings expected during the late summer and fall months.

Holdings of frozen fish totaled 90,000,000 pounds on July 1, an increase of 50 per cent over holdings on the same date last year and approximately one-third above the average quantity in storage at this season during the past five years.

Sharing the concern of the Coordinator's Office, the fishing industry reports that in most sections little freezer space that can be made available for fishery products remains, and in some areas capacity has already been reached.

The period of peak production in the fishing industry normally comes during the fall, but the Coordinator's Office pointed out that unless quantities of the fish now on hand are moved promptly into trade channels it will be impossible to handle the catches that can be made during this season and production will be adversely affected.

Transportation difficulties and shortage of help in retail stores are believed to be among the causes contributing to the unusual quantity of fish remaining in storage, the Coordinator's Office said.

While the increase in supplies of frozen fish is noticeable in all sections of the country, the central region and the Atlantic coast from Maine to Virginia report the sharpest gains. In the north central states holdings have been virtually doubled; in the New England, middle Atlantic, and south central states increases run from 69 to 75 per cent. A 14 per cent increase is reported for both the Pacific and south Atlantic coasts.

While holdings of a few species show little change compared with last year, many favorite food fishes are available in greatly increased quantities. Mackerel has increased from 3,000,000 pounds in storage last year to 9,000,000 pounds. Also available in much larger quantities are cod, haddock, rosefish, and whiting among New England species, scup, shad, and croakers in the middle and south Atlantic sections, and blue pike, lake herring, and lake trout in the Great Lakes area.

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